Latin American film festivals of virtual, augmented, and immersive reality: An overview

Aproximación a los certámenes cinematográficos de realidad virtual, aumentada e inmersiva en América Latina

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Abstract

The surge of techniques of virtual reality applied to cinema carried out an actual revolution for the film industry. Indeed, such features applied to the development of several dimensions of the audiovisual, mainly video games, broadened production, exhibition, and commercial expectations. This phenomenon has not gone unnoticed by film festivals as part of cultural and creative industries. Nonetheless, in Latin America, there are only a few events exclusively devoted to virtual, augmented, 360º, or immersive reality applied to films. By analyzing the film festivals' official web pages retrieved through the FilmFreeWay database, this paper describes some key features of Latin American film festivals specialized in these areas of visual production. The review shows that such efforts are in their very early stages, in the making, or they have not triggered the interest of the local film industry.

Keywords: *film festivals, Latin America, virtual reality, immersive reality, 360º cinema.*

Resumen

La irrupción de las técnicas de la realidad virtual aplicada al cine supuso una auténtica revolución para la industria cinematográfica. Aquellos usos aplicados al desarrollo de diversos ámbitos audiovisuales, fundamentalmente de los vídeo juegos, ampliaron las expectativas de producción, exhibición y comerciales. Este fenómeno no ha pasado desapercibido para los festivales de cine en tanto industria cultural y creativa. En América Latina, los certámenes destinados exclusivamente a la realidad virtual, aumentada, en 360º o inmersivos son escasos. Este artículo describe los rasgos genéricos de los festivales de cine especializados en estas áreas a través de la base de datos de *FilmFreeWay* a través del análisis de las páginas web oficiales de los festivales. Se trata de esfuerzos en ciernes o que no han despertado el interés de la industria.

Palabras clave: festivales de cine, América Latina, realidad virtual, realidad inmersiva, cine 360º.

1. Introduction

The film industry can claim its origins in the old circus spectaculars, coupled with the development of optical technology which, playing with visual effects, managed to create a sense of movement through images. Cinema has continued to capture new techniques and technologies to make it more attractive and, above all, find ways for the spectator to feel like a participant in the experience. Thus, the emerging of virtual reality techniques and their possibilities for application in cinema proved to be a real revolution for the industry. All those uses increased production, exhibition and commercial expectations. Indeed, in recent decades, the industry has even benefited from innovations developed in environments as diverse as videogames. These transformations have not gone unnoticed and have consequently been showcased in the more cultural and creative aspects of film festivals, and they have also had an influence on cinema in Latin America.

This article presents an initial description of the common features of film festivals specializing in these areas based on an analysis of the official websites of these events, found using the database *FilmFreeWay*. This is a preliminary and descriptive text about those festivals held in Latin America, using the distribution platform FilmFreeWay as reference for study. Both the number of events as well as their basic features are discussed and, based on this, we identify and describe some of the common tendencies.

2. Theoretical Framework. New phase of film festivals and distribution platforms

In 2019, Argentina's Immersive & XR International Film Festival - XRAR held its premiere event, citing the following justification for its creation on the event website:

> So-called Immersive technologies have gained incredible ground in recent years, radically changing the human experience and perception of audiovisual content. (...) We go from seeing a film, to living

out an experience. From Latin America we bring to the world a pioneer festival in showcasing storytelling in virtual reality, thus creating different audiences and approaching users with new narratives and languages in development[1].

We find ourselves in a context in which "Hispano-American cinema is constantly being reinvented" and "growing outward to indeterminate spaces on an ever-changing map that shows the incessant exploration of new recording devices, formats of representation, means of circulation and exhibition, technologies and exchanges between fiction, the documentary and experimental film" (Urrutia, 2018, p. 12). Urrutia also goes on to say that the appearance of new festivals is supported by the publication of research that, from a disciplinary diversity, draws "a map of knowledge" that covers different moments in history, themes and even geopolitical dimensions. The emergence of this academic production on and about film supports and also strengthens the region's festival circuit.

The emergence of virtual reality techniques applied to film created a real revolution for the film industry. All such uses increased production, exhibition and commercial possibilities. On a par with cultural and creative industry, the phenomenon has not gone unnoticed in film festivals. Nonetheless, considered alternative platforms to commercial success (Klevjer, 1998, p.55), film festivals in the region specializing in this area are relatively scarce. Moreover, these experiences have rarely been studied. Therefore, this paper contributes to addressing these two informational voids: the lack and small number of film festivals specializing in virtual reality, augmented reality, 360º or immersive film, in general and in Latin America in particular, as well as scarce academic research on them.

In the research field of cultural industry, the last two decades have marked the growth and enrichment of an increasingly complex corpus of publications on film festivals in general, and in Latin America in particular. These competitions trigger the interest of diverse sectors, such the economics, education, cultural impact and their effects on local tourism. The pioneer studies of Redondo (2000), Cabezón and Gómez-Urdá (1999), Harbord (2002), Nichols (1994) and Jurado (2006) are crucial to better understanding the role of film festivals in

the industry and how they have gone about defining themselves. Redondo analyzes them as a tool for the promotion of films and/or the filmmakers; Cabezón and Gómez-Urdá highlight the importance of these competitions in the dissemination of the work of new filmmakers. Harbors discusses the possibilities that festivals open for alternative markets. Finally, Jurado develops his doctoral thesis to show the functions of the festivals and manifest their potential as a career launching platform for new filmmakers.

Film festivals and their cultural and social functions have also been studied under diverse theoretical and methodological perspectives from disciplines as diverse as anthropology and ethnography (Vallejo, 2014; Peirano, 2018), education (Arteseros and Albiol, 2016) and audiences and their interests (Vivar, 2016; Palma, Alvarado and García, 2014). Case studies and their surveys have identified, described, and gathered information necessary for analyzing and locating film festivals and have contributed to establishing the foundations of this sub-field in the study of cultural and creative industries. Milestone papers like those of Iordanova and Torchin (2012), focusing on activism and the defense of human rights and identify topics and the motivating forces behind their organization, or that of De Valck, Krendell & Loist (2016) where we find the main foundations for the study of these events, taking as cardinal points the study methods, the motives that bring about their organization and execution, modalities based on the different activities or the theoretical concepts which they share.

Previous research identifies and argues what functions are considered essential and provided by film festivals, such as promoting the audiovisual industry and facilitating networking among professionals (Adelman, 2005), serving as a fair or market (Linares, 2009; Redondo, 2000; Cabezón & Gómez-Urdá, 1999) and promoting tourism in the city in which it is held or promoting the organizing entity itself (Adrianzén, 2007).

2.1 The transformation of film festivals: from local to global

Throughout their history, festivals have modified their strategies in order to reach their potential interest groups and were quickly no longer limited to a geographic area so as they expanded past the border. The changes to the processes of production and distribution on all levels caused by the use of the internet (Casero, 2010), brought about the creation, maintaining and dissemination of official online websites for film events which are used to post their programming, activities, missions and visions, as well as foster their communities. If a festival did not have an online presence, it was as if it did not exist.

As telecommunication and social media have continued to develop, in particular the digital public sphere, and have conquered different aspects of usage, consumption and circulation of cultural products and content, websites became insufficient by themselves as they alone did not attract audiences. Instead of being an attractive showcase aimed at drawing the attention of interested audiences, film festival organizers *hit the streets* in search of creators as well as audience and, in the face of competition, proposed a variety of products. These streets were not physical, but rather virtual, and were fundamental in positioning to achieve visibility, generating different activities and actions, in short, to exist. Two complementary actions were key in the process: internationalization and specialization. The first is produced in parallel to the needs of the creators in order to promote their work (Peirano, 2018):

> The festivals have become key spaces for the production as well as circulation, exhibition and exchange of domestic films. They embody the value regime of international art cinema, giving value and legitimacy to the works and their artists, making them the gatekeepers of international film (...). (p. 66).

The second, specialization, was a key option in this context (Jurado-Martín, 2018, p. 252). Just as the researcher states, all festivals seen and appreciated today are active on websites of cultural interest, are advertised, present in exhibition spaces, and most importantly on distribution platforms.

This change in administration of the competitions balanced —or unbalanced, according to how you look at it— the panorama of cine festivals: some very creative, low-budget but significant and ge-

nuine in their content, were able to draw the attention of their audiences and of the industry sector; while others that were more generously funded, but of mainstream content and more budget-reliant died along the way. Film festivals specializing in immersive, 360º, augmented and virtual reality experiences are a form of micro-specialization.

2.2 Background

Some of the pioneers in research on virtual reality include Ivan Sutherland (1965), with his paper *The ultimate display*, and Jaron Lanier (1992), with the paper *Virtual Reality: The Promise of the Future*, both proposing, conceptualizing and defining the term. It was Murray (1999) who generically described virtual environments and their possibilities for participation and interaction. For Johnson (2012), the presentation of *La llave maestra* by Frank Baurn supposed a technological factor that, over time, contributed to understanding the visualization of information based on data. Various authors agree that Krueger is an essential figure in the origins of reflection and application of virtual reality developing projects in which the audiences observed alternate realities with mediated use of technology (Sherman & Craig, 2002).

The underlying focus of these treaties is so general that opinion is divided, with some that support them, and others that dismiss them. Crary (2008) states that the technological initiatives directed and created to provide an audience with a more immersive experience should be separated from immersive experiences intended as a phase in the process of subjectivation of the individual. McLuhan (1964) also reminds us that each time we attach to *something* —a new invention, a new technology—, that something also attaches to us. Virtual reality and 360º are only produced when the content "provides immersion, should be complete and have a full range of vision from any angle, similar to our sense of vision in real life" (Cantero, Sidorenko & Herranz, 2018, p. 81).

Therefore, the actions and objectives that follow virtual reality and its related formats are conscious and sought after. They design worlds alternate to that of reality, an immaterial culture (Flusser, 2017, p.29) that even allows the subject to artificially in-

teract in an environment similar to the physical (Kirner & Tori, 2004) with a complementary communicative context (Slater & Wilburn, 1997). In this context, the user initiates an experience of innovative consumption, where for example, he or she is presented with documentary productions specifically and explicitly focused on augmented and virtual reality formats (Gifreu-Castells, 2017).

Previous research has explored these formats and their objectives to create proximity between the subject and content, as well as consolidate interested audiences. Some practices along this line have been discussed in the field of journalism with its use and incorporation via example VR (De la Peña et al., 2010; Domínguez, 2012; Paíno, Jiménez & Rodríguez, 2017) and the uses of chroma key (Sementille, Américo, Rolfsen, Marar & Kizzy-Cunha, 2013); in its applications in non-fiction and the documentary (Gifreu-Castells, 2017; Gantier & Bolka, 2011; Gaudenzi, 2009); in the realm of videogames (Cuadrado-Alvarado, 2014; Martínez-Cano, 2015; Rose, 2011; Boas, 2013; Holmberg, 2003); in business and institutional communication (Herranz, Caerols & Sidorenko, 2019), and in user experience (Hendriks, Wiltink, Huiskamp, Schaap & Katelaar, 2019).

There are very few interconnections between film, virtual reality and film festivals. Some case studies analyze the use of these formats in specific films: for example, Martínez-Cano (2018) makes a case study of the documentary *Carne y Arena* (2017) by Alejandro González Iñárritu, presented as an installation that uses the techniques of virtual reality in the programming of the Cannes Festival and outside of competitive selection.

3. Methodology

The principle objective of this article is to describe the main characteristics of the film festivals specializing in virtual reality, augmented reality, film in 360º and immersive film held in Latin America. For such, a first step requires identifying a list of competitions dedicated exclusively to this format.

Thus, we applied a complementary methodology in two directions: quantitative analysis and qualitative analysis. The first will be used to determine the number of virtual reality film festivals held in the geographic area of study. For this purpose, we use the database of the festival distribution platform FilmFreeWay, one of the most comprehensive worldwide. The second most active, Withoutabox, went offline in October 2019 and therefore is out of date. Other similar databases are Festhome (restricted access granted with registration), Clickforfestivals and Movibeta, but none of them have the number of events registered on FilmFreeWay, a platform that claims to have over 7,000 registered events.

The second phase of the analysis is qualitative, exploratory and descriptive, constituting the bulk of in-depth study. Qualitative analysis is limited to the data posted on the analyzed distribution platform and on the festival webpages. Therefore, the possibilities are endless. In order to exhaustively address the problem, other techniques like extensive interviews or the use of documentation provided by the festivals themselves should be used.

The preliminary quantitative study implies accruing data on an international level based on an analysis using search terms. As it is a database in English, the search words come in that language and are the following: 'virtual reality', 'augmented reality', '360', '360º' and 'immersive', as well as the abbreviations 'VR' and 'AR'. Practically at the beginning of the search, and given the result of previous experiences in this database like that described by Jurado-Martín (2018, p.251), the results must be carefully filtered selecting for the category of 'film festival'.

This way we can rule out other events that either do not include competition, an undeniable feature of film festivals (García, 1997, p.75) and their inherent professional assessment of the audiovisual productions presented therein (Jurado-Martín, 2006, p.50), and therefore would be a sample; or do not include exhibition, and therefore would be a contest.

Nevertheless, we use the search engine with most fields in the distribution platform with the most festivals, using the search terms selected in the film festival category. The result is a list of events, both festivals and non-festivals, that in the majority of cases are generic in terms of topic and format. This

is due to search filters being designed based on what the data festival organizers specify in the competition criteria or in the features of the competition and that, probably for reasons to do with reaching more interested parties, are heavily skewed toward those options.

Therefore, the result of the filtered search is not precise. This calls for the researcher to perform a new search process in order to guarantee a real and effective list of film festivals specialized in a specific area. To that end, a new filter was created in which only those competitions with a competitive section are included, in which the very name of the event features one of the indicated terms, which are: *virtual reality, augmented reality*, 360, 360º and *immersive* and the abbreviatures VR and AR.

The second – qualitative – analysis addresses the characteristics of the competitions specializing in these formats. We use the categories proposed by Jurado-Martín (2006): name, place and event date, webpage, email (at the time of analysis), number of years running, formats competing, publication of terms and conditions for the competition, non-competitive sections and parallel activities, judges panel (number of members and profiles), categories that award and how many of them, organizing entities, as well as number of sponsors and collaborators. The data makes it possible to compare competitions.

4. International VR, AR, 360º and Immersive Film Festivals

In order to consolidate a list of film festivals specializing in VR, various filtering processes were required. The final list of international competitions taken from the FilmFreeWay database containing the descriptive terms in the name, and matching with selected search criteria, consists of nineteen events.

Out of nineteen festivals, eight are held in the USA, five in Europe, three in Canada, two in Latin America and one in Australia. In the Filmfreeway database, these nineteen represent 0.25% of the 7600 events held in March 2020. These events are generally considered new given that practically 75% have fewer than five years running. This in-

formation doesn't correlate with the development of immersive, RV, 360º or RA films, but it is important in how they appear so late after the fact. The non-commercial sector (Jurado-Martín, 2006, pp. 106-109), which many festivals belong to, is not interested in these formats. We also note that these applications are of higher interest for marketing, artistic and videogame events, but not so much with film and the film industry. In fact, in the past, there were a number of festivals that failed to endure and no longer exist today. Certainly, twenty or so film festivals dedicated exclusively to virtual reality is a very small number compared to the total amount found in the database.

Many times, these audiovisual formats are considered a category within a competition, which is to say, organizers find no standalone potential in them. However, they are still interested in opening up festivals to more participants regardless of the category or the format that are presented for competition, or if they are submitted as complementary, parallel non-competitive activities.

If we widen the search criteria to include film festivals with a virtual reality category, the list increases to eighty-seven. Organized by continent: forty-nine in the Americas- forty-five in the United States-, one in Central America, three in South America, nine in Asia, five in Oceania and one in Africa. Out of these, 53% have run for less than five years, 33% between six and fifteen and 14% for over sixteen years.

If we eliminate the virtual reality category from the search, maintain that of the film festivals, and we only search using the selected terms in its main search engine, the list gets even bigger, reaching 527 film festivals. Out of these, 205 correspond to virtual reality, 202 to augmented reality, 79 to 360º film, and 41 to immersive. These numbers do not consider the repetition of festivals that match multiple search terms.

Finally, the biggest problem with the FilmFreeWay database, which we consider to be the most complete –given the number of search criteria and number of festivals–, continues to be, even when only filtering film festivals, that the results continue to include information on competitive non-screening events that cannot be used in this sample. Therefore, it becomes necessary to analyze Latin American festivals for these formats on a case-by-case basis.

Table 1. Festivals specializing in virtual reality

Nº	Name of festivals	Country	Years held
1	Cinequest Film & VR Festival	USA	30
2	Lichter VR Storytelling Award	Germany	13
3	The Virtual Reality Filmmaker Showcase	United Kingdom	10
4	360 Science and Technology Film Festival	USA	6
5	FIVARS, Festival of International Virtual & AUgmented Reality Stories	Canadá	5
6	Real World VR, TFF (VR-Immersive)	Australia	4
7	360 Film Festival	France	4
8	VR Fest Mx	Mexico	4
9	YVRFF	Canada	3
10	Stoyryforms: Remixing Reality	USA	3
11	ANIDOX VR	Denmark	2
12	Global Voices Film Festival USNC-UN Women VR	USA	2
13	360 VR Film Contest	USA	1
14	XRAR, Immersive & XR International Film Festival	Argentina	1
15	VR 13	Canada	1
16	VRE Festival	Italy	1
17	Kinetoscope VR Film Festival	USA	1
18	KremFest Virtual Reality	USA	1
19	CyberiaVR Film Festival Spring	USA	1

Source: Own elaboration

5. Immersive film festivals in Latin America

The two festivals held in Latin America are VR Fest MX in Benito Juárez, Mexico, and XRAR, Immersive & XR International Film Festival in Argentina. These two competitions contain three out of four selected search words in the case of the Mexican event, and four out of four in the case of the Argentine event.

5.1. VR Fest MX – Virtual Reality Festival of Mexico

VR Fest MX – Virtual Reality Festival of Mexico presents itself as a platform "that combines art and narrative in regards to immersive technologies, virtual reality and augmented reality"[3]. It claims to be Mexico's first virtual reality film festival. It is held in September, although its first event was in August, in Benito Juárez, Cuauhtémoc, Mexico City. It is organized by the Universidad de Comunicación and directed by Gabriela Acosta. This is the only available information about its organizers. There is no other information on additional sponsors or organizers.

At the time of the search for purposes of this article the website was undergoing scheduled maintenance and not available. All the information provided here was found on FilmFreeWay and other complementary and diverse sources found online. Its official website is vrfest.mx and the official email is hello@vrfest.mx. Contact details are active on the distribution platform, nevertheless, in 2020 it should have held its fifth annual event but nothing indicates that it took place at the time of the publishing of this article –December 2020-. Neither was it marketed in communication media, or on Facebook, nor was the event updated on FilmFreeWay. Formats admitted to competition are virtual reality and 360º film. There are two prizes: National VR Content Prize and International VR Content Prize, there is no indication whether the prize includes monetary compensation. Registration is free and there are no age limits or country requirements for work submitted.

Given the implemented methodology, which implies a quantitative approach to the analysis of competitions specializing in VR in Latin America,

a first assessment looks at the composition of the judges panel, parallel activities, terms and conditions for competition and event organization.

In terms of the judges panel, it only indicates that it is comprised of experts in virtual reality content development, but gives no other information. Therefore, we cannot evaluate whether the judges' profiles are appropriate or balanced considering gender and profile. They organize other activities like conferences, workshops, gatherings, performances, among others. The terms and conditions of the competition are posted on the distribution platform. There is no information on the total number of featured productions, given that it is possible that this information is posted on a website which was inaccessible at the time of analysis.

Overall, it is a large-scale competition in terms of unlimited destinations from which works can be submitted, but modest in terms of organization and activities are tailored to a university context. All the necessary information is available in order to transmit formality and quality, but cannot be confirmed on the event website. The exception is the lack of information on the number and profiles of the judges.

This information opens the door to a subsequent qualitative study that uses in-depth interviews, documentation provided by organizers, etc., beyond the content posted on its website, following research guidelines developed by Peirano (2020) for small-format film festivals based on the case of Chile

5.2 XRAR- Immersive and XR International Film Festival

he XRAR- Immersive and XR International Film Festival of Argentina, also claiming to be the first competition of these characteristics in its country, is described on its website with the following:

> XRAR was created to set the standard in terms of exhibition, enabling and serving as a promotor and catalyst of immersive narrative content. The abbreviation XR stands for the term extended reality, that refers to the combination of all the real and virtual environments together with the interactions between people and technological devices. It includes

representative forms of augmented reality, augmented reality and virtual reality, as well as areas of overlap between them.

The event is held in September, in Quilmes, Province of Buenos Aires, Argentina and organized by VR Attack, Casa de la Cultura de Quilme¡s and the Municipality of Quilmes, two public institutions and one private. As listed in the staff credits in the catalogue, there are many people involved in organizing the event: a supervisor from the Municipality of Quilmes, a director from La Casa de la Cultura de Quilmes, and the position of Chief Director and Producer appointed by VR Attack. The following describes a complete organizational chart of twelve departments and nine staff members. In terms of collaborators, as they are not described as sponsors, there are six entities from the private sector.

The official website is: http://www.xrar.com.ar/ and the email address is xrarfestival@gmail.com. Contact information is found on the distribution platform and not on the website. In 2020, it will hold its second annual event. Competing formats are all those related to immersive content. There are two awards: Prize for the Best Feature Film in 360º and Prize for the Best Short Film in 360º. It does not indicate whether the prize includes some monetary compensation. Registration is free and there are no age limits or country requirements for work submitted.

The judges are organized in two groups in order to award each one of the prizes. In the catalogue, they publish their name, brief biography and picture. In the case of the judges panel for feature film, there are three members, all men, and with appropriate academic and professional profiles. The short film panel has three members, including one woman. The entire panel's profiles are published and all the judges have their profiles, picture and brief biography posted, and are appropriately suited to their positions.

They organize non-competitive sections and other activities such as: the non-competitive sample of Argentine and international content; special projections in other immersive / interactive formats; and special, free-of-charge training workshops and activities. The terms and conditions of the competition are posted on the distribution platform, but not on the website. Based on information found in the catalogue, three feature films and six short films were exhibited.

Being its first year, the competition posted, although in pdf format and with a very simple website, a lot of important information promoting transparency and consequently the quality of an event of these characteristics. Effort and degree of difficulty have value and it is obvious that there are few feature film productions in these formats. The complete list of judges panel profiles is posted which is much appreciated, but it could be improved by balancing the gender ratio.

6. Discussion and conclusions

This article presents an analysis of film festivals specializing in VR, AR, immersive and 360º film in Latin America, identifying general and special features of each one. After a quantitative analysis determining the number of these events worldwide using the FilmFreeWay database, only two film festivals specializing in virtual reality were found in Latin America. Based on this data, we performed an initial approximation to the object of study.

The VR Fest MX is the only competition of these characteristics in Mexico. The fact that it is organized by a university speaks in large part of the characteristics we can use to describe it as a quality event, with the exception of the need to post the jury panel profiles. The XRAR- Immersive and XR International Film Festival of Argentina, also the only event of its kind in the country, is still a recent creation, given it has only been held once, in 2019. Its team has gone on to disseminate more information on social media and the platform than on the website. This causes problems in the search for content. The website provides a large amount of information and the only improvements that can be proposed is the search for gender equality among the members of its judges panels and the content accessible directly from its website.

In the spirit of debate, micro-specialization in the field of virtual, immersive, augmented reality and 360º film has practically been reduced to a bare minimum in the case of Latin America. However, as demonstrated, it isn't an endemic problem, given

that nineteen competitions were found worldwide, including two of Latino origin.

If we start on the basis that film festivals are spaces for exhibiting non-commercial proposals, and possessed of their own signature profile, we could say that the cultural or business organizers are not interested in putting together this type of event. They do not attract the attention of filmmakers or that of the industry. On the other hand, if we analyze the uses of these formats, we prove that they imply a human and economic investment that goes beyond the creation of a traditional audiovisual production team. Here is where both worlds collide: festivals are fundamentally aimed at the non-commercial, and those interested in virtual reality aim precisely to obtain the maximum benefit. We could say that the creation of a videogame will have a return on investment, but we cannot see a similar return on the creation of a signature audiovisual film product.

Can we imagine large super audiovisual productions that invite augmented reality or 360º film? Yes we can, if they are used by large public and private institutions for promotional, educative, and cultural purposes, among others. Can we imagine modest and small audiovisual productions that use virtual reality and immersive film resources? Yes we can, in artistic, experimental creations, etc. But, what about cinematographic? There's a long road ahead for this type of production, or rather the little ground they have covered so far has been of little interest.

The future of film festivals specializing exclusively in virtual reality is still in a phase that we must watch carefully. As an alternative, there are sections and activities that run parallel, whether competitive or not, and the inclusion and participation of the category in events for other formats. The previous is such that today virtual reality, augmented, 360º and immersive films participate on the same level as fiction, documentaries, animation, short film, amateur, gender, educational, and experimental film in a *hotchpotch* of film productions, or with any luck the competition features a specific category for them.

Notes

1. Link to official XRAR website: http://www.xrar.com.ar/
2. When it comes to gender equality, there has been a shift towards gender neutral terminology in the Spanish language when using nouns or articles and pronouns that accompany nouns that at the same time designate whether it is feminine or masculine. Thus, words like professor, the teacher or the researchers refer to fe(male) professor the fe(male) teacher or the fe(male) researchers.
3. Extract from VR Fest MX Virtual Reality Festival of Mexico website.

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